

H.Q. AMG.,  
15th Army Group,  
C.H.F.  
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AMG/504/56

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C.G.S.,  
15 Army Group.

3rd January 1944

I refer to Freedom telegram 20766 dated 29th December 1943, which directs that the policy regarding Typhus control in the civilian population of Naples and Occupied Italy shall be under the direction of Flambo.

2. The removal of Typhus control from the direction of Medical Services, A.M.G., and the placing of it under an operational military organization will not only cause complete confusion in medical and civil administration, but places upon the operational military authorities a responsibility which must be that of A.M.G. In fact A.M.G. has been formed to relieve the military authorities of such responsibilities. This is the second occasion in which A.F.H.Q. have removed from A.M.G. a civil responsibility and placed it under Flambo. The first was the feeding of the civil population.

3. This tendency to place everything under the local military organization shows a lack of confidence in A.M.G. on the part of A.F.H.Q. If that lack of confidence is shared by the G.O.C. in C., then I would suggest the re-organization of A.M.G. under the command of some other A.D.D.A.O.

4. I am advised and satisfied that Typhus in Naples is not an hyper-endemic. The situation is serious but is not out of control. Colonel Cheyne, Director of Medical Services, A.M.G., together with Colonel Crichton, Senior Medical Officer, Region III, have the matter in hand and with the assistance of the U.S. Typhus Commission, whose presence and help I welcome, are the best people, because they are members of A.M.G. and therefore in closest touch with the civilian population and the civilian administration, to deal with the Typhus outbreak in any city or part of the area. I submit that Flambo is not in such a position.

15th Army file

5.1 In a telegram from Regional Civil Affairs Officer, Region III, dated 29th December 1943, it was recommended that all Typhus work in the civil population be coordinated by A.H.G. Public Health Directorate under general directions A.F.H.Q. Brigadier Galloway and Colonel Cheyne were in complete agreement with this proposal, which involved that the U.S. Typhus Commission would work with them under my specific direction acting on the G.C.C. in C's behalf.

6. This will ensure that the medical authorities would work in the closest liaison with the civil administration under the Regional Civil Affairs Officer of Region III under which Naples falls and is, in my candid opinion, the only practical way to tackle the Typhus campaign.

7. I must add that Major General Cowell, Surgeon A.F.H.Q., commented on a signal sent to W.D. (AGWAR) by Brigadier General Fox, Chief of the U.S. Typhus Commission, relating to the outbreak in Naples, as "highly coloured, not entirely accurate, and somewhat hysterical". The signal was cancelled by the Chief of Staff, A.F.H.Q., and a 'mollified' signal sent off, but this gives an indication of the action likely to be taken by Brigadier General Fox who, while admittedly the world's expert in Typhus, shows a tendency to become alarmist.

8. I shall be glad if immediate action could be taken to put the responsibility for the medical administration relating to the control of Typhus under the proper authority, i.e. A.H.G.

Brigadier,  
Deputy Chief Civil Affairs  
Officer.

P.S.. Since writing the foregoing I have seen General Fox who is as flamboyant as General Cowell describes.

I have put my point of view to him: he agrees and has gone back to Naples to work out a modus operandi with my Director of Public Health. The main problem of tackling the typhus outbreak will be dealt with but this doesn't alter my opinion about the principles involved.